



THE WARITH MAGAZINE

An Official Magazine of the Holy Shrine of Imam Hussain (as)







EDITORIAL

In the Name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

By the grace of God, we humbly present to the Imam of our time, the eighth and this year's final issue of The Warith Magazine.

This has indeed been a challenging year for many of us and by the grace of Allah, we have emerged stronger and better prepared for the coming year. In this issue we aim to ignite the flame of our love for Imam Hussain so it may enlighten our lives for the coming year. The love of our master is a sanctuary that protects us from the difficulties associated with uncertainty. It is also a primary factor in helping us strengthen our spiritual progress and arriving at our perfection as human beings. Taking this into account, our contributors have focused on various aspects of the spiritual nature of being connected to Imam Hussain (as)

Our first article reflects on the spirituality of Imam Hussain (as) by utilizing a variety of examples from his flawless Dua of Arafa. The second article is a self-reflection piece which describes how the events of Ashura act as a catalyst that sprouts spiritual growth and uplifts the hearts of Imam Hussain's lovers. Our final article discusses our perfection as human beings and what it means to attain eternal bliss. As is our tradition, the articles are followed by a beautiful poem that reminds us that when all else is lost, there is always the Transcendent Hand of hope that pulls us towards salvation. Likewise, we finish off this year's final issue with some questions and answers.

Many hands have worked together to bring this issue to fruition, and we hope it can be a source of inspiration for all that are struggling in these challenging times.

I would like to thank our content contributors, editors, artists, designers, and The Batool Foundation for their contributions.

Syed Hussain Ali
Editor of The Warith Magazine





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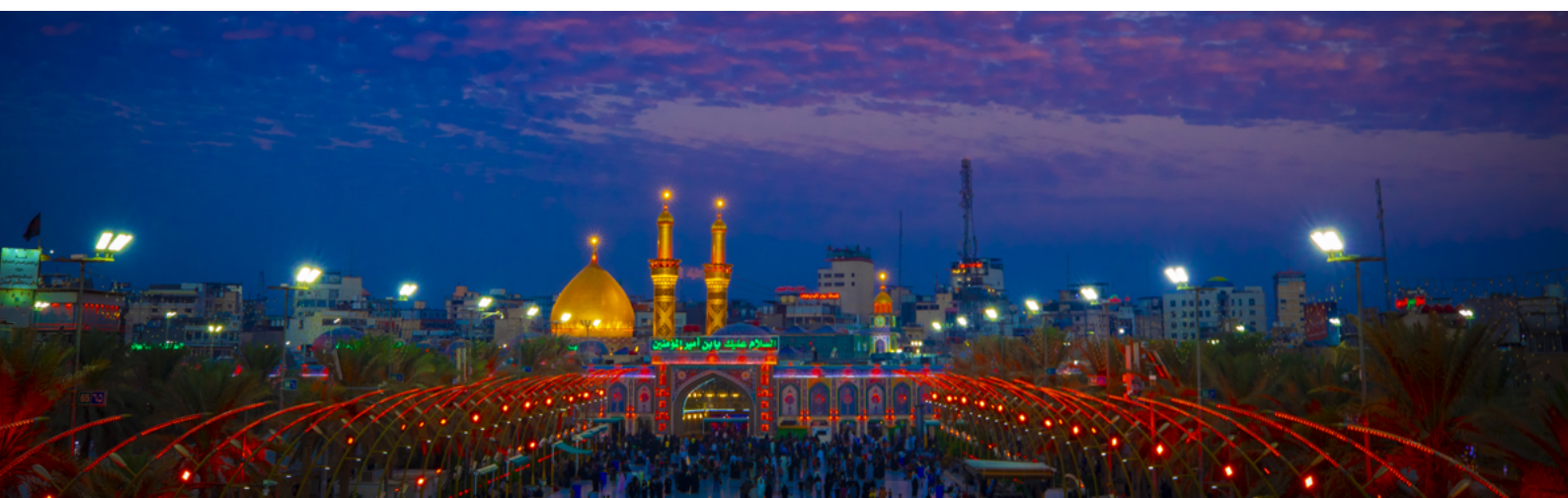
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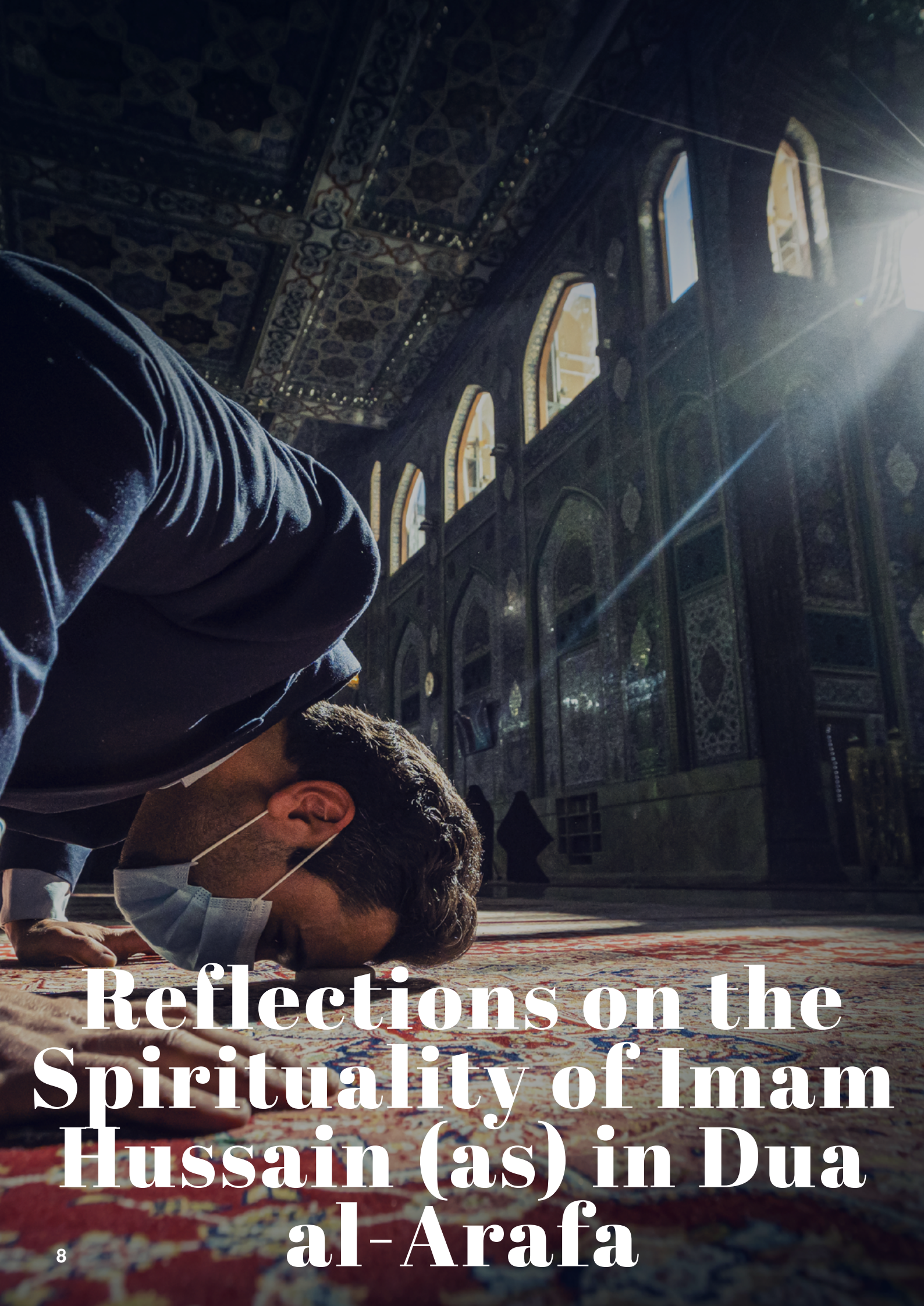
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Reflections on the Spirituality of Imam Hussain (as) in Dua al-Arafa

The name of Imam Hussain is one which evokes power and emotion whenever it is heard. Immediately when people hear this name, their focus is directed to the day of Ashura and the tragedy of Karbala - the tragic day when he, along with his male family members and loyal companions, drank from the sacred cup of martyrdom, allowing their blood to water the tree of sacred-resistance, with their names to be etched forever in the memory of the righteous – who would seek to emulate the archetype of struggle; and the tyrants who would do all that they could to try and erase the memory of the greatest martyr who ever lived.

For most people, the beginning and end of the life of Imam Hussain ibn Ali, peace be upon them both, revolves around this event of Ashura.

They tend to forget that Aba Abdillah, peace be upon him, lived 54 years:

1. His first 6 years of life in Medina allowed him to enjoy the company of his grandfather Prophet Muhammad, blessings of Allah be upon him and his family, and his mother, Fatima al-Zahra, peace be upon her, until their death in 10 AH.
2. He was then trained in the lap of his father, the Commander of the Faithful Ali, peace be upon him, a man who was not only known for his bravery on the battlefield, but a master in speaking with eloquence which no one around him could ever match – and not only in speaking to people around him, but also in the way he communicated with Allah, as it is through the powerful tongue of the Leader of the Pious, peace be upon him, that we have hundreds of sermons and words of wisdom which until today, form the basis for research and analysis of scholars and thinkers and which guide Government policy. It is from this same magnanimous individual that we have received priceless gems such as Dua Kumayl, Dua al-Sabah and other beautiful prayers.

Thus, it is no wonder that his second-born son would provide the people of his era and all time to come with powerful sermons, such as his potent address to the masses who had gathered in Mina before the hajj pilgrimage as well as one of the most touching supplications – the Dua of al-Arafa.



Shaykh Saleem Bhimji was born in Fort Rae, North West Territories in Canada's Arctic region, and grew up in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

After completing his post-secondary education at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT), he and his wife moved to Medina, New York to study in the Imam al-Asr Theological Seminary. Shortly thereafter, they shifted to Qom to continue religious studies in the Theological Seminary of Qom.

Returning to Canada in 2000, Shaykh Saleem worked with the Islamic Humanitarian Service, a non-profit Muslim charity in Kitchener, Ontario for three years in various capacities, and then with The World Federation of KSIMC, a UK-based Muslim charity as their Director of Publications, for three years. During this time, he established his own institute to further writings and translations on various Islamic themes, Al-Fath Al-Mubin Publications (www.al-mubin.org) as well as his own small business to facilitate the publishing and sales of Islamic literature, the Islamic Publishing House (www.iph.ca).

Along with his writing, translating, and audio and video content creation, his most recent project is QAIM Institute - Quran and Ahlulbayt Inspired Media (www.qaim.ca) to further the promotion of the teachings of the Quran and Ahlulbayt via modern means of technology.

To date, he has written and/or translated over 50 full-length books in English which have been printed in Canada, USA, Europe, the Middle East, and India, and has independently published over 30 books through his publishing house.

The same man who was referred to when a young child as being the Leader of the Youth of Paradise, peace be upon him, and the same one from whom we learn lessons of steadfastness and rejection of oppression – even if it means us losing our lives – is the same one from whose blessed lips we receive a supplication which is normally recited, unfortunately, only one day a year – the Day of Arafa – by far the most important day for anyone who wants to turn back to Allah in repentance.

Yes, the Supplication of Arafa which Imam Hussain ibn Ali, peace be upon them both, has left for the believers is a powerful prayer with descriptive passages, deep insights and touching pleas to the All-Loving Creator which has no equal in the corpus of supplications.

One of the blessings which the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them all, has given to the Muslims and to all humanity, is the inspiring supplications – some which are nothing short of a literary miracle – one of those being the supplication of the day of Arafa of Imam Hussain ibn Ali, peace be upon them both – something which cannot be found elsewhere in Islam or ANY religion for that matter.

Reciting the famous supplication of Arafa of Aba Abdillah, peace be upon him, with full presence of the heart creates such a transformation in the person which will open a new chapter in their life; it has the ability to raise the soul to the heights of the heavens, such that the soul will traverse with the angels at the highest realms and mingle with the souls of the highest of the awliya of Allah.

Even for the greatest of scholars of Islam, it is perhaps extremely difficult if not humanly impossible to review each and every passage of this supplication and explain it, as how can we describe the words of the lover speaking to his Beloved? How can we fully understand and appreciate the words of the infallible Imam used when pouring out his heart to Allah? How can people who are trapped by the vicissitudes of life of the temporal world ever begin to fully comprehend the words of a man who although was of this world, however existed in a plane which was somewhere else?

Unlike other supplications which the believers recite daily or weekly, the Dua of Arafa is quite lengthy, and rightfully so as when it comes to speaking to Allah, can we ever really limit the amount of time we spend in His presence? Thus, the supplicant pours his heart out to the Creator on the most important day of the Islamic calendar – the ninth of Dhu'l Hijjah.

This supplication, which takes close to one hour to “read,” contains numerous themes, teaching the lover the ways of servitude and worship; instructing the reader on how to seek true repentance from Allah and how to acquire enlightenment of the heart along with many other motifs. If read with full sincerity and reflection with meditation on each passage, it will undoubtedly affect the soul and create an internal revolution after which one will find no comfort or solace in anything other than love of Allah.

Let us reflect on two passages of this supplication and what they should mean to us today.

The Era in which we Exist

There is no doubt that 2020 has been an incredible year for all humanity.

In the past, individual nations and peoples of certain religions, skin colors, economic and social statuses and other differentiators have had to suffer ‘natural disasters’ and ‘man-made calamities’ – however such adversity was localized. However, with the Covid-19 Pandemic in full swing, the entire globe has been humbled by the power and majesty of Allah and what they are witnessing around them.

The ways in which people are dealing with this recent challenge differ based on factors, however in some way or another, everyone is feeling what it means to be a refugee in their own country – or even in their own home.

With corruption rampant around the world in which governments, even the so-called democratically elected leaders which we elect to govern, there is seemingly nowhere to turn for refuge and solace – especially in times where even the so-called Muslim countries are bickering amongst one another, rather than uniting to tackle our shared antagonists.

What we see today is nothing new however. From the Quranic narrative of history, we understand that with the coming of the Prophets of Allah and their success in establishing a just government, there were times of harmony. But as we know, the seeds of corruption would be planted and develop.

Eventually, with the birth of Prophet Muhammad, blessing of Allah be upon him and his family, and the establishment of the Islamic state in the blessed city of Medina, the roots of injustice were ripped and an era of peace reigned in the Arabian Peninsula, allowing a generation to come into this world under the umbrella of the Just Government of Allah – something which we desperately need today – a just system based on the true teachings of Islam as exemplified by Prophet Muhammad, prayers of Allah be upon him and his family – a true blessing.

Imam Hussain (as) alludes to this point in his famous supplication of Arafa in which he prays to Allah, saying:

لَمْ تُخْرِجْنِي لِرَأْفَتِكَ بِي وَلُطْفِكَ لِي وَإِحْسَانِكَ إِلَيَّ فِي
دَوْلَةِ أُمَّةِ الْكُفْرِ الَّذِينَ نَقَضُوا عَهْدَكَ وَكَذَّبُوا رُسُلَكَ

...It is on account of Your sympathy, kindness and compassion to me that You did not take me out of my mother's womb and into this world during the time of the government of the heads of unbelief (kufr) – those who had breached their covenant with You and denied Your messengers...

Here, the Master of the Martyrs, shows us that living in an era of justice under the shadow of a benevolent ruler, as Prophet Muhammad was, and his rightful successor, Imam Ali ibn Abi Talib was, was indeed a great blessing from Allah – something which we have been deprived of since the day that the Commander of the Faithful, peace be upon him, was attacked and assassinated in the year 41 AH.

Although “Islamic Governments” have come and gone and continue to establish themselves, however we know that it is only under the banner of the only rightful guardian and implementer of the Just nation, Imam al-Mahdi, may Allah hasten his return, that we will be graced to live under such a system that Imam Hussain (as), thanked Allah for in his supplication.

Inability to Faithfully Thank Allah

Within the unique teachings which Imam Hussain (as) shares in his supplication is the sheer inability for believers to ever thank Allah for all that He has done and continues to do for us – actually, Imam Hussain makes it known that it is impossible to even thank Allah for ONE blessing which He has graced us with.

In Surah al-Nahl (16), verse 18 of the Quran, Allah makes it clear that: “And if you would count Allah's favors, you will not be able to number them; most surely Allah is Forgiving, Merciful.” That is, even if we took ONE blessing of Allah and tried to enumerate the benefits which we accrue from that one item, it would not be possible.

“**Consider the tree and benefits which we derive from it. Most often we plant trees to provide shade and beautify our landscapes. These are great benefits, however trees also provide other less obvious benefits¹**”

Social Benefits

1. Trees make life nicer. It has been shown that spending time among trees and green spaces reduces the amount of stress that we carry around with us in our daily lives.
2. Hospital patients have been shown to recover from surgery more quickly when their hospital room offered a view of trees.
3. Children have been shown to retain more of the information taught in schools if they spend some of their time outdoors in green spaces.

Environmental Benefits

1. Trees reduce the urban heat island effect through evaporative cooling and reducing the amount of sunlight that reaches parking lots and buildings. This is especially true in areas with large impervious surfaces, such as parking lots of stores and industrial complexes.

1. Taken from www.bgky.org/tree/benefits. Last accessed on November 25, 2020.

2. Trees improve our air quality by filtering harmful dust and pollutants such as ozone, carbon monoxide, and sulfur dioxide from the air we breathe.
3. Trees give off oxygen that we need to breathe.
4. Trees reduce the amount of storm water runoff, which reduces erosion and pollution in our waterways and may reduce the effects of flooding.
5. Many species of wildlife depend on trees for habitat. Trees provide food, protection, and homes for many birds and mammals.

Economic Benefits

1. Well placed trees can reduce cooling costs in the summer by shading the south and west sides of a person's home. If deciduous trees are used they will allow the sun to pass through and warm the home in the winter.
2. Evergreen trees on the north side of a home and shrubs around the foundation of a home can act as a windbreak to reduce the cooling effects of winter winds.
3. The value of a well landscaped home with mature healthy trees can be as much as 10% higher than a similar home with no or little landscaping. (Topping will reduce the value of your trees)
4. Some indirect economic benefits of trees are that if we reduce the energy we use then utility companies will have less demand placed on the infrastructure, thus reducing operating costs which can be passed on to the consumer.

Imagine all of this, and more, from planting a tree – one blessing which Allah has provided humanity. Now think about ALL of the other things which Allah has given us and how many benefits they have – it would be literally impossible to do justice to the blessings of The Creator.

Add to that the fact that even the ability to thank Allah itself requires the ability to thank Him for giving us the ability to thank Him – it goes in a circle until the end of time!

It is for this reason that the Master of the Martyrs, Hussain ibn Ali (as) has been quoted as saying in his famous supplication of Arafa:

لَوْ حَاوَلْتُ وَأَجْتَهَدْتُ مَدَى الْأَعْصَارِ وَالْأَحْقَابِ لَوْ
عَمَّرْتَهَا أَنْ أُوَدِّيَ شُكْرَ وَاحِدَةٍ مِنْ أَنْعَمِكَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُ
ذَلِكَ إِلَّا بِمَنْكَ الْمَوْجِبِ عَلَيَّ بِهِ شُكْرُكَ أَبَدًا جَدِيدًا وَثَنَاءً
طَارِفًا عَتِيدًا

“...By all that I have just said, I bear witness that if I try my best and strive throughout all ages and all times, if I live them, to thank properly only one of Your favors, I will not be able to do that, except through a favor of You, which also requires me to thank You for it, once again with new thanking and with praise that is newly acquired and newly prepared...”

In this part of the supplication, Imam Hussain, peace be upon him, testifies with the reality of true faith; through the heart-felt covenant and pure monotheism that true thanksgiving of Allah can never be attained for even ONE of the blessings because the success of thanksgiving for each blessing which we have been given is a new blessing that needs fresh thanks, and this new thanks is also a new blessing – going to infinity. So, do we just give up?

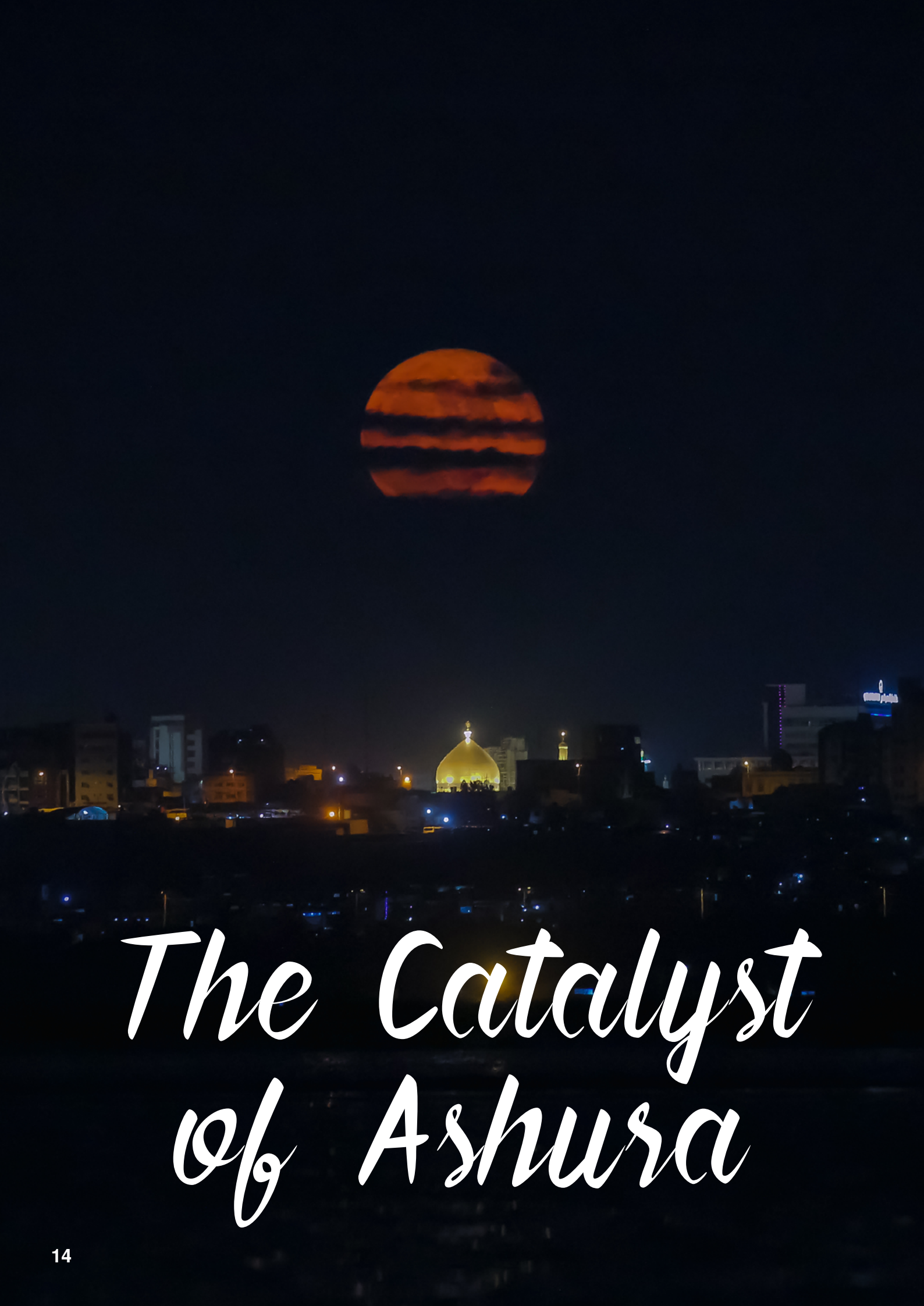
Obviously not. We must continuously thank Allah, our Creator and Giver, for all that we have but must realize that the best way to show thanks for a gift is to ensure that we use that gift in the way which the patron expects it to be used.

To be given the power of sight and then to use it to look at the impermissible is the exact opposite of showing thanks – it is to deny the blessings of Allah; to be given the power of hearing and then to use it to listen to people backbite, falsely accuse others or to listen to impermissible music is to be ungrateful to the blessings of Allah; to be given wealth and then to be miserly and not help the needy, widows, orphans and to spend in the way of education and propagation of the teachings of the Ahl al-Bayt, blessings be upon them all, is the ultimate display of ingratitude to Allah and He has every right if He decides to take away such blessings from the recipient.

In conclusion, in order to do justice to Imam Hussain ibn Ali, peace be upon them both, we must recognize that he had a very active life from birth until martyrdom. Yes, the tragedy of Karbala plays an important role in the life of every Muslims and rightfully so, however we cannot forget his teachings in many other aspects of life – most especially in our spirituality and attempts to connect to Allah. Unfortunately, there are sometimes attempts to simplify the Ahl al-Bayt, peace be upon them all, and so we see slogans

such as “Live like Ali; Die like Hussain,” but as we press ahead with an attempt to better understand our responsibility to Allah and to better appreciate the guides which He has sent, we need to revise the cliché that we can only learn about death from Hussain (as) and recognize that we can learn about life, spirituality, connection to Allah, and much more from the Master of the Martyrs, Aba Abdillah al-Hussain ibn Ali, peace be upon them both.





The Catalyst of Ashura

Ashura comes, much alike an earthquake which shatters the heart of anyone who loves the Messenger (saw). This earthquake, no matter how many years or days pass by, will always feel as though we were transported to the year 61 A.H. As though the heat and pain of Imam Hussain's calamity, is as alive now, as it was then. And so is the flame of the soul-revolutions it eternally inspires. For it is a remembrance of love rooted not in the past terrains of history alone – rather in the eternal Light that is still alive and governing. Like lost doves searching for direction in hazy nights, the remembrance of Imam Hussain arrives yearly like a guiding hand over our heads, like a gentle persuasion to spiritually awaken, like an infinite generosity gifting infinite oceans of love for the thirsty soul to drink from; healing, curing, reinvigorating, realigning us – if only we choose to allow our soul's deepest yearnings to be satiated through the portals of divine love. For the name of Imam Hussain (as) has the power to jolt one's life into the much-needed awakenings, in order to live lives realigned to the heart of faith.

It matters not what time or space we are in, it is our souls which connect to the rawness of the tragedy. We are taught from a young age how the tears and lamenting for Imam Hussain (as) are known to be healers; the custodians of divine blessings, especially with the presence of the Lady of Light who graces our gatherings for her beloved son. The tears are testimony to how, when they fall, they purify, wipe away sins, and in grieving the atrocities which befell virtue; draw us closer to the essence of faith, and further from the vices which corrode it. It is as though these tears bring with them the blessing of enabling the soul's lens to be cleansed, to see with a clearer view: those ambitions which are rooted in God, and those aspects of life not useful or prosperous towards our own ultimate journey of return to God.

In particular, whilst mourning quenches the grief, they too serve a greater purpose. As tears have the power to purify, as the days go on, one realises these very tears must enact as our vehicles to internal change. For whilst our tears are momentary - Ashura is a catalyst, not a mere milestone. With the gatherings of remembrance within the ten days, our work simply begins. For buried in the midst of this grief is the strive to better oneself towards being a loyalist of our immaculate Imam, and in doing so, elevate to find and serve our divine purposes.



Saarah Bokhari is the writer and poet for the book *Arbaeen: A Lens into a Sacred Journey*. She studied MSc International Relations and specialised in Islam and Global Politics at The London School of Economics and Political Science, and Religious Education at the University of Oxford. She was a Cambridge University Interfaith Ambassador in 2015 and has worked as a TV producer for various humanitarian causes.

“
In this light, we pray our weeping
for the atrocities which befell virtue,
may bear witness to the conquering
of our own vices within.

I tell myself therefore, not be afraid to question in these days: who am I? where am I? where have I been? where am I headed? Not just now, momentarily, in the heat of the blessed moments drowned in the love of the divine – but for the purpose of my soul's journey in this life. Is where I am headed a path that honours the name of the ones who sacrificed everything for us to live with the perfected message? Every year, the anniversary of Ashura to Arbaeen brings with it a period of commitment to self-reflection; an avid endeavour to translate the tragedies of history into the relevant question marks upon my own life, choices, decisions, and direction. For no matter where you may be when the 10th Muharram dawns, the universe mourns the onslaught of the Master of Paradise, the inheritor of the pure Prophet (saw).



Having the privilege and opportunity to be alive another year to mourn and shed tears for the sake of the love of Imam Hussain, for the sake of Fatima Zahra, humbles one into the recognition that true gratitude for this lies in utilising the opportunity to gain as much proximity to the infallibles in this time period as possible.

It's a time to shed weight, uproot stagnant weeds, and cultivate robust foundations which will withstand the tests of our times. For the beauty of this time is that the sun of truth shines in our lives by the mirrors of divine perspective. In these days, Karbala is our perspective. Imam Hussain, Hazrat Abbas, Lady Zainab are our perspectives. Habib ibn Mazahir, Hurr, and each of the brave companions are points of reflective perspective. By mourning these beloved souls who passed within the scope of a few hours, the ink of divine blood in Karbala illustrates to us the nature of true victory in this life. In the way the blessed personalities enacted upon embodying eternal truths in the face of the challenges of their time... in their honour, and in hope of their nearness, now is the time I strive to ask myself: what are the challenges of my time? What are my solutions? How do I better my journey in order to gain closeness to the path of also achieving victory in my final destination? How may my lens be altered, to see this world for what it is – a mere means in my inevitable return to my Lord?

What strikes me yearly, is how at the heart of this tragedy, is the element of choice. The dichotomy of this world which we are all each, on a daily basis, so familiar with: the peak of virtue in our infallible Imam, which came face to face with the heights of vice found in the lowliest of the world. The battle, and the spectrum of valiant saints, obedient to the Divine, thus resonates to the conscious human within each of us.

With hearts tender and softened by the love of this beautiful Imam and his loyalists, as we utter the words “how I wish I could be present...” we are forced to question, as we currently stand - what side do our actions suggest we would have really fought for? The side of obedience to faith, or the side of the world and its charms? Or perhaps somewhere, unsure, in between. The battle exemplifies how the choice of faith is an investment, which results in the eternal; whilst the allures of the world are superfluous and of instant gratification, though results in dissatisfaction.

The questions in the chambers of the self, become ever-more vital in light of the belief of a living Imam, a living proof of divine mercy, the living manifestation of the complete Prophetic message which we yearn to cherish, serve, and protect with our lives. I recently read, what separates Shia Islam from the majority of other world faiths, is the notion of an alive and governing divine and just leader. One, who although in occultation, graces and guides, and is more present than those present before us. Truly, He is the inspiration within oneself to take the baby steps necessary to enact upon internal change. To slowly eradicate the vices which distance us from our Imam, and in hope to inhabit virtues with draw us closer to Him and the eternal light of the Prophetic message.

By utilizing the catalyst of tears, questioning our perspectives, and with commitment to change through choice, we pray that our actions align to our hearts and tongues in calling ‘Labbayk ya Hussain’, and God-willing, ‘Labbayk ya Mahdi.’

*how I wish
I could be
present ...*





ETERNAL BLISS

The nature of this world is such that it is always evolving and undergoing change. Specifically, in recent times, the rate of this change has been profound. Man is always having to adapt to new methods and before he knows it, the playing field has changed. Economics, technology, social issues and politics are just a few examples of the many different fields that have undergone and continue to experience tremendous change. These changes bring with them their own set of issues and challenges, but one thing that is a constant, regardless of all the hustle and bustle, is the fact that man is and will always be in pursuit of one thing - happiness. So the question arises – what constitutes happiness and who is the one that is truly happy?

Studies have shown that the general quality of life per person over the past 40 years has improved on a global scale. In most countries, there is a direct link between a person's life satisfaction and their income level. However, from another side, one particular set of statistics may leave one puzzled. The World Health Organization estimates that roughly 260 million people worldwide suffer from depression. That is approximately 30% of the world population or almost 1 in every 3 people. Furthermore, there have been studies to suggest that materialism is a highly contributing factor towards depression and those people that have materialistic tendencies are more likely to be depressed. Therefore, we can deduce that having a good bank balance, a big comfortable house or a fancy car does not guarantee the happiness of an individual.

The Arabic language, unlike many other languages, is one of precision. Many a time, a word is translated into English and would have the same meaning multiple times. However, the context is usually overlooked, and the translation ends up lacking the accuracy required to convey the correct message. One such translation is what is usually translated into English as "happiness".

There are terms such as "Farah" and "Suroor" that can also be translated as happiness. However, these types of happiness are very transient in nature and usually linked to physical pleasures. The term that we are looking for is "Sa'adah". According to most Arabic lexicons, this word implies a deeper internal contentment and pleasure that is long lasting and not easily affected by external factors.



Suhail Fazaldin was born in Tanzania, but was raised and spent most of his life in South Africa. He later moved to Dubai and then London, where he achieved a diploma in Sports Science. He has an undergraduate degree in Islamic Philosophy and Mysticism and is currently pursuing a Masters in Theoretical Mysticism, as well as continuing his studies in the other classical Hawza sciences.

This term is repeated several times in our scriptural sources and conveys the meaning of eternal bliss or felicity, as opposed to eternal damnation or wretchedness.

Murtada Mutahhari, one of the most revered Shia thinkers of modern times explains the difference between happiness and pleasure. These two terms are often mistakenly interchanged with one another.

He states that although happiness and pleasure may have similar meanings, they are not synonymous to one another. A person could gain pleasure by doing something, but that does not necessitate that they will attain happiness. Or they could seek a pleasure that is followed by a greater pain. Similarly, a person undergoing a painful experience will not necessarily be wretched or damned.

And they could experience some pain that is merely a prelude to a greater pleasure.

The famous Islamic Philosopher, Avicenna, has written an entire chapter on “Sa’adah” in one of his last works, “The Book of Directives and Remarks” (al-Isharat wat-tanbihat). In it, he states that the term happiness (Sa’adah) and perfection (Kamaal) are synonymous to one another. The real eternal happiness that is sought by man is none other than that perfection he strives for. And the real perfection that he is after is none other than that eternal happiness that he seeks.

The Holy Prophet (saw) is reported to have narrated from Gabriel the Archangel: “Verily the happy one, who has attained a complete and true felicity, is the one who loves Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) during his lifetime and after his death. And verily the damned one, who has attained a complete and true wretchedness is the one who hates Ali ibn Abi Talib (as) in his lifetime and after his death”.

This narration very succinctly states that eternal bliss and felicity in its truest sense is for that person who is a lover of the Commander of the Faithful (as) and that wretchedness and damnation is for that person who hates his (as) blessed personality. The very fabric of our faith is contingent on this love for the Holy Prophet (saw) and his pure Progeny (as). That same love that invites one to action and obedience and not merely the love that is an expression of words. In the Holy Qur’an, verse 23 of chapter 42, the Holy Prophet (saw) is instructed to tell the people:

Say: I do not ask of you any reward for it but love for my near relatives

This verse demonstrates the importance of this love for the Ahlulbayt (as) and the central role it plays in the life of every believer.

Another cornerstone of any believer’s existence is the visitation (ziyarat) of the Ahlulbayt (as). Much emphasis has been placed on this institution of pilgrimage and the great benefits it has for the believer.

Without a shadow of doubt, the ziyarat of any of the Holy Infallibles has immense benefits and rewards. However, the visitation of Imam Hussain (as) holds a special place in the hearts of the believers. Our scriptural sources are replete with great virtues of the one that performs the ziyarat of Imam Hussain (as).

The following narration shows us some of the great benefits and effects of this sacred pilgrimage. Imam Sadiq (as) is reported to have narrated:

Don’t ever leave the ziyarat of Imam Hussain (as) and instruct your friends in the same way. God will lengthen your lifespan, increase your sustenance, and you won’t live except that you shall be happy, and you won’t die except that you shall be happy, and you will be written down to be one of the happy ones.

This narration not only demonstrates the direct connection between the pilgrimage to Imam Hussain and the existential impact it has on the believer, it also teaches us that one who performs it will attain happiness in both worlds.

Similarly, the tragedy of Karbala and the events of Ashura are pivotal in the life of the believer. The sacrifice of Imam Hussain was one that brought with it universal lessons in all walks of life. Lessons that have permeated society and benefitted those that take heed. Lessons that are at times not understood by the mind, but by the hearts. An example being the paradoxical statement of Lady Zainab, when quizzed by the tyrannical ‘Ibn Ziyad about how she found everything that transpired to her brother and family, she firmly responded:

I saw nothing save beauty

Where others would interpret the entire event as one of grief and suffering, this great lady understood and possessed the deep insight required for one to fathom such a great sacrifice in the way of their Lord. She had realized what true beauty, love and happiness was.

On one side of the banks of the Euphrates, we find a group that was too occupied with securing their worldly desires, even if it meant losing out on that greater and eternal happiness and victory. It is well documented that Umar ibn Sa'ad, the commander of Yazid's army, was promised the governance of Rey, a post that he had long craved even if it meant fighting the beloved grandson of the messenger of God. Even after being offered worldly benefits by Imam Hussain (as), ibn Sa'ad's greed and hard heartedness led him to his own eternal damnation.

On the other side of the banks, a completely different tale transpires. The title of being the best of companions is not something to be taken lightly. This group that accompanied Imam Hussain (as) were very virtuous and had reached the loftiest levels of faith.

After being absolved of any sort of burden or compulsion to partake in the battle the next day, they each came forward and assured their Imam that they would never leave his side and that even if they were to be cut up into pieces, the honour of giving all they had, including their own lives, was something they would not even have to think twice about. These were not mere utterances, but words that were accompanied by and in complete harmony with their actions.

Such words and actions are none other than the meaning of true love, a love that is accompanied by knowing the rights of your master, a love of one that knows the true straight path, a love of one who awaits that permanent greater pleasure and happiness, no matter what temporal pain it incurs. Such altruistic actions show that these blessed individuals, alongside their realization of what true love for the Holy Progeny (as) was, knew where their own true perfection lied and where their true happiness was attainable. This was none other than real eternal bliss!



The Transcender

Pressure mounts from all corners of this arduous life.
Be it health, economic or political, I'm surrounded by strife.

Drained I am of energy lying face down devoid of hope.
Grabbing at air in anticipation of clutching a Divine rope.

I look to the east and physical devastation I observe.
Corruption rampant, leaders the devils they choose to serve.

Human life holds little value reflected in the smashed edifices.
Yet the broken hearts surpass even the destruction that persists.

Widows, orphans, displaced, suppressed, they're all but pawns.
A playground for the elephants to play whilst crushing lawns.

I look to the west and I see man has chosen to try and negate God.
Being sold a system that worships decadence and other facades.

Running through mazes for promises of prizes that are transitory.
Stuck in lifetimes of existential emptiness; an abhorrent purgatory.

Illusions of freedom and empowerment the reality is mental slavery.
Madness, absurdity, hysteria the just rewards of any kind of bravery!

The darkness is suffocating, the loneliness drowns me, pulls me under.
Born into this state. Have you abandoned me O God? I can't help but wonder!

nt Hand of Hope

In my harrowed state I hear a voice, it begins to address me:
'Think not My child We have not heard from your heart its plea!

I am your Master and the Master of all that has existence.
'Open your eyes and you will see between us there is no distance!

My mercy and love pours upon you without ceasing for even a moment.
For each of My creatures apportioned, it receives for what its meant.

And do not despair of My comfort and mercy for I love you more than you know.
Deserving or not, My sun rises everyday, upon all I surely bestow.

The rope you seek is the very vein that runs through your neck.
Its easy to feel isolated and feel that against you stacked the deck.

But know My child I am the source of the one cure that you seek.
Hope is Mine and Mine alone to give, this is essential to my mystique.

Look east or west and it you will never find for it rests in My Hand!
So take hold of it, and by it tall you will assuredly stand.

Instil your hope in Me and I will present to you My greatest revelation.
For you will realize nothing is outside of I, thus you will be cured of your isolation.

My child think well of Me and let Me give Myself to you.
And you will realize that I was never absent in your heart hitherto.'

Abū al-Ḥasan (October 27, 2020)





Q&A

This is where our contributors and editors answer your questions, so please keep sending them to alwarith@imamhussain-lib.com

Q Are the afflictions we face from God or because of our own actions and those of other humans?

A The answer is all three although the believer is never in a situation that is not good for them. Sometimes afflictions are a recompense for our sins which we face in this world rather than the next. At other times we face difficulties because of the actions of others, but in these kinds of tests if we are faultless then our patience is rewarded. And at times we face tests from God in order to raise us to levels that we cannot achieve with our own actions. To understand the philosophy of trial according to our scriptural sources please see these short podcasts:

[PART 1](#) | [PART 2](#) | [PART 3](#)

Q How goes one truly enjoy Ibadah?

A Enjoying worship stems from the feeling of God's presence and His love within. For these feelings, a person needs to be calm, not in a rush to perform another task and sincere in their pursuit. They need to comprehend how much they need worship and how it is their lifeline to a connection to the Divine and all that is truly spiritual. If worship is approached humbly, lovingly and beautifully then a person will find solace in worshipping and will deeply value their connection with God, which is a connection of love and happiness.



Can the intrinsic nature of a human being lead him or her towards the existence of God?



According to our understanding of the natural disposition of human beings, humans are intimately connected to reality as they are part of that very reality and not outside of it. So since the human is connected to God, they know Him within themselves and that is why the first step to religion is the recognition of God. The path of Islam is also sometimes described as the path of natural disposition and that is because it is a path that develops that initial flame of connection into a burning fire in the smoothest and most beautiful manner.









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*Please send contributions for all future issues, comments and questions to:
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